

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Ten Days that Shook the World: the Russian Revolution

Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
III. People, Places, and Environments
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption

Grade Level: 9–12 (Internet research, similarities and differences)

Objectives: The student will:

- Research key web sites for information about the Russian Revolution
- Create a poster using technology about the Romanov family, the last Tsarists
- View a classic video about the Revolution and discuss with classmates
- Experience through reading, excerpts from John Reed's famous book
- Determine how documents fit into the whole picture of the alleged "amazing revolution"
- Use a blank map of Russia to determine American interests in 1918

Time: 3 class periods

Materials: Documents: **1917** *An Amazing Revolution*
1917 *Seeds of Revolution: Discontent in Petrograd*
1917 *US Recognizes New Russian Government*
1918 *Department of State Press Release on Russian Intervention*

Resources: Blank Map of Russia

Access to the Internet:

- <http://edu.glogster.com/what-is-glogster-edu/>
- <http://www.nevsky88.com/SaintPetersburg/Revolution/>
- <http://www.marxists.org/admin/search/index.htm>
- <http://www.marxists.org/archive/reed/1919/10days/10days/index.htm>
(Have students read the preface)
- <http://www.marxists.org/archive/index.htm>
- <http://www.barnsdle.demon.co.uk/russ/rusrev.html>
- <http://www.amazon.com/Shook-World-Classic-20th-Century-Penguin/dp/0140182934>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KeIn8AduwTg> 102 minutes

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

The Russian Revolution of 1917 is also referred to as the Bolshevik Revolution and the October Revolution. There were actually two revolutions—the first in February, during which the Tsar abdicated and the United States was the first to recognize the new Provisional Government. The second revolution in October saw the overthrow of the Provisional Government by the Bolsheviks.

In 1919, American John Reed wrote a book about his experiences as a journalist covering the Revolution, the now classic *Ten Days that Shook the World*. Reed had been contributing articles to an American magazine, *The Masses*, until the U.S. Government shut it down under the Espionage Act of 1917. But one of Reed's friends continued to publish his reports, which were the basis for Reed's first person account of the October Revolution. Reed died in 1920, shortly after the book came out, and is one of a few Americans buried at the Kremlin Wall Necropolis in Moscow.

Diplomatic relations between the United States and Russia were interrupted after the Bolshevik takeover, and the Ambassador left Moscow on November 7, 1917. The Embassy remained open under a Chargé, until it was closed on September 14, 1919. Diplomatic relations would not be restored until the 1930s.

Pre-Lesson

1. Arrange for access to a computer lab for three days and or cart of wireless laptops for use in classroom.
2. For Homework, direct students to go to this web site, <http://edu.glogster.com/what-is-glogster-edu/> to learn how to make a digital poster. They will use the site to make a poster about the Russia's last Tsar and his family and will also find out what happened to them.

Have them include pictures on the poster, then print it out in color and bring it to class the next day. Pictures can be found on many sites, including:

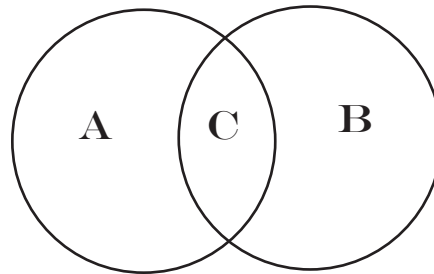
<http://www.google.com/search?q=images+of+Romanov+Family&hl=en&client=safari&rls=en&prmd=ivns&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source>

Day One

1. Ask students to share their glogster poster creations and take a minute to two to explain what they discovered. Place the posters for viewing around the room or even in the hall outside the classroom.
2. Give each student the document, *An Amazing Revolution* from Ambassador David F. Francis to Secretary of State Robert Lansing.
3. Ask them to read the document to see what Francis is reporting that seems amazing to him.

4. Now hand them the document, *Seeds of Revolution: Discontent in Petrograd* sent to the Secretary of State by North Winship, an advisor at the consulate.

5. Have students work together and use a Venn diagram to indicate the similarities and differences in the two documents.



6. Using either computer lab resources or laptops in the classroom, have students research photos and media reports on the first and second Russian Revolutions. They should make notes as well as list key locations where events are happening.

7. Ask students to read at least the preface of John Reed's book.

8. As a class or individually, have the students watch the 1919 silent movie on the Russian Revolution via You Tube (102 minutes long.) If the class period ends before the movie, continue it at the beginning of the next class period.

9. As homework, ask them to share the similarities and differences of the March and October revolutions on a second Venn diagram.

Day Two

1. Have students continue their research and movie watching from the previous day. Try to finish the movie in the first 25 minutes; it can be fast-forwarded if necessary.

2. Conduct a discussion comparing aspects of the movie with the similarities they created in the two Venn Diagrams. (10-15 minutes)

3. Distribute the document, *The United States Recognizes New Russian Government*, and have the students read it through.

4. Then ask them to answer three questions:

- a.** Why did the United States want to be first to recognize the Provisional Government?

- b.** What was the reaction of the Russian Ministers to Francis' words about conducting business with the new government?
 - c.** Was this too sudden, too preliminary? What do you think? What happens next and what happens to the Romanov family? (Students may have to refer back to research on the Internet sites)
- 5.** Finally, have students write five questions they still have on this "amazing" revolution. Collect the questions (and look them over after class) to prepare for a follow-up discussion. Ask students to keep their notes and Venn diagrams in their notebooks.

Day Three

- 1.** Discuss the questions students wrote at the end of yesterday's lesson, answering as many questions as possible and noting similarities of the questions.
- 2.** Hand out a blank map of Russia and ask students to locate key places using a textbook or their internet research notes.
- 3.** Distribute the document, *Department of State Press Release on Intervention in Russia*. Have students notice the date, August 1918, and the fact that it is a press release. Students should then read the whole document.
- 4.** Again using their textbooks and the internet, ask them to find additional information to understand the press release.
 - a.** Plot Siberia on the Russia map, along with Vladivostok, Murmansk, and Archangel, and the countries of Czechoslovakia, and Japan. Then answer these questions on the back of the map.
 - b.** Why is the United States interested in this eastern area of Russia?
 - c.** What guarantees are given by the U.S. to the Russian people?
 - d.** Why are we not intervening in the war on the western front?
 - e.** What other countries are involved in this plan?
 - f.** Why are we announcing that we are sending a commission of merchants, agricultural experts, labor advisors, Red Cross representatives, and agents of the Young Men's Christian Association to the area?
 - g.** Are these military plans or economic plans?
 - h.** Does any of this information appear in your current textbook or did you find any reference to it in your research? Discuss your findings.
- 5.** Hold a class discussion on the students' responses. Ask them to keep their answers and the map in their notebooks so that they can refer to it again during the "Cold War" era.

Extension Activities:

- 1.** Show film clips from *Reds* (a movie version of John Reed's life) and/or *Dr. Zhivago* showing the upheaval of the social order, as well as the military conflicts. ■